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SUBJECT: MEDIA SUMMARY: DECEMBER 22, 2005

Summary:

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Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld's Visit: U.S.

Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld's visit to Pakistan is the front page story in most national dailies, many with front page photos as well. Articles report on his brief "unannounced" visit to the quake-stricken areas of Muzaffarabad and Shinkiarri on the heels of Vice President Cheney's visit. Articles focus on his visit to the MASH and his meeting with pilots and crews of Chinook helicopters at Qasim Base "which have been shuttling the bulk of relief supplies for millions of quake survivors."

Although the visit was brief, it generated prominent coverage in the media. Almost all articles quote Secretary Rumsfeld as praising Pakistan as a "moderate country" and reiterating the U.S. intention to continue supporting Pakistan in rebuilding and rehabilitation efforts. Headlines in some newspapers highlight his statement that "Usama may be unable to" run the militant network and has not been heard from for nearly a year. (paras 2-7). Newspapers also highlight Secretary Rumsfeld's visit to Afghanistan and his meeting with President Hamid Karzai and his assurance of "continued military support" to Kabul. (paras 8-9).

Military action against insurgents in Kohlu, Balochistan province, is another front-page story today. Karachi-based "Dawn" reports that "two more camps of insurgents" were destroyed in the mountainous areas of the district. (para 20).

Vice President Dick Cheney's Visit: While Vice President Cheney's visit to Pakistan is the focus of extensive editorial comment today, it also generates a news story in the nationalist Urdu daily "Nawa-e-Waqt" which reports that Cheney "had to cast a tie-breaking vote" in the Senate cutting short his "Mideast visit."

Vice President Cheney's visit to Pakistan and his meeting with President Musharraf where the latter urged the U.S. to help resolve the Kashmir issue generates editorial comment in almost all national dailies today. Nationalist Urdu daily "Nawa-e-Waqt" comments that "U.S. sincerity would be judged from the practical measures it takes, not VP Cheney's assurances." Populist Urdu daily "Khabrain" praises the U.S. for its earthquake assistance and feels that Vice President Cheney's assurance of continued support "is also commendable." In its editorial titled "Multifaceted Ties," center-right national English daily "The Nation" writes that "a member of Mr. Cheney's delegation has reportedly

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objected to certain relief organizations being allowed to function in the quake-hit areas; as long as these organizations continue to provide much-needed relief nobody has the right to object." (paras 22-30). End Summary.

-- News Stories

1. "U.S. Vice President Casts Tie-breaking Vote in Budget Bill and Gets it Approved," "Nawa-e-Waqt" (12/22)

"By casting a tie-breaking vote in the U.S. Senate yesterday, U.S. Vice President Dick Cheney got a bill approved. A surprising situation developed in the Senate when voting showed a 50-50 tie on the bill and as

President of the Senate, Dick Cheney was required to cast the tie-breaker for which he had to cut his Mideast trip short and return to the US."

2. "U.S. Is With Pakistan In This Hour Of Need; Aid Activities To Continue For Weeks: Rumsfeld," "Jang" (12/22)

"U.S. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld has said that the U.S. would not leave alone its friend Pakistan in this hour of need. During his short visit to Pakistan, he said that the relief operations would continue for many weeks to come. He said that the world should accept U.S. relations with moderate Islamic countries like Pakistan. He said that the U.S. was pleased to work closely with Pakistan military and President Musharraf in order to mitigate the sufferings of the quake-stricken people."

3. "American Troops To Remain In Earthquake-Stricken Areas For Several Weeks: Rumsfeld," "Nawa-e-Waqt" (12/22)

"U.S. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld arrived in Islamabad yesterday morning. Talking to journalists traveling with him, he said that Pakistan has proven to be a modern Islamic state and added that it is our ally. He said that it is important that the world acknowledges U.S. relations with modern Muslim states. The world must see that the U.S. is cooperating with countries fighting against people who behead others and are involved in extremism.... He said that the U.S. is reducing the number of troops sent for relief work; the number was 1200 previously and is now 850, he said. Similarly, the

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number of helicopters has been reduced from 24 to 12. He visited Muzaffarabad and Shinkari and toured the U.S. field hospital, met with U.S. troops and patients being treated there.... According to diplomatic sources, since this was not a bilateral trip, Mr. Rumsfeld did not meet with Pakistani officials, contrary to expectation. According to sources Mr. Rumsfeld travels abroad at Christmas time to greet U.S. troops posted abroad personally, and this visit was made in the same connection."

4. "U.S. Defense Secretary's Unexpected Arrival In Islamabad; Pakistan Is A Moderate Country, We Will Continue To Support Musharraf: Rumsfeld," "Khabrain" (12/22)

"U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld arrived unexpectedly in Pakistan yesterday where he visited the earthquake stricken areas, met with American troops and other officials. Talking to journalists he said that even if Usama bin Laden is alive, he is not in a position to command Al Qaeda. He said that the U.S. would continue to provide assistance to Pakistan for reconstruction and rehabilitation. He added that Pakistan is a moderate Islamic country and that the U.S. would continue to support it."

5. "Rumsfeld Visits Quake-Hit Areas" "Dawn" (12/22)

"US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld arrived in Pakistan on Wednesday for a first-hand look at areas that were devastated by the October 8 earthquake. Mr. Rumsfeld, who arrived here unannounced, was received at

Chaklala airbase near Islamabad by his Pakistani counterpart Rao Sikandar Iqbal. He later flew to Muzaffarabad and visited the main US MASH hospital. He also visited a US surgical unit at Shinkari in northwest Pakistan which has been treating the injured. Mr. Rumsfeld also met pilots and crew of US Chinook helicopters at Qasim airbase in Rawalpindi near Islamabad, which have been shuttling the bulk of the relief supplies for millions of quake survivors."

6. "Rumsfeld Doubts Usama In Position To Command Al-Qaeda" "The News" (12/22)

"The Pakistan government had made preparations for the brief visit of US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld about a week ago when it was officially conveyed that

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the high-ranking US official would visit the country. His travel here, however, remained a guarded secret. It was the Ministry of Defense that coordinated the few hours that Rumsfeld spent in Pakistan. While the main reason for Rumsfeld's visit was to bring some holiday cheer to the American troops in Afghanistan and Pakistan - and that was all that he wanted to include in his itinerary - the US Embassy was convinced that a call on President Musharraf would be appreciated. After the high-profile visit of Vice President Dick Cheney on Tuesday and his extensive meetings at the Aiwan-e-Sadr, Rumsfeld spent very little time with Musharraf in the afternoon.... Earlier, according to media persons traveling with him, Rumsfeld called Pakistan "a moderate Muslim regime in the world that is demonstrating ... partnership". "I think it is important that the world recognizes the relationships the United States has had in the past with moderate Muslim states and what we do," Rumsfeld said and urged that the world should "see that the activities of the United States are not to support those ... who are opposed to the people, who cut off heads and engage in violent extremist activities". Rumsfeld said he doubts that Usama bin Laden is in a position to assert full command over the al-Qaeda terror network. He said he found it interesting that Usama had not been heard of publicly in nearly a year."

7. "Usama May Be Unable To Command, Says US" "Dawn" (12/22)

"Al-Qaeda leader Usama bin Laden may no longer be able to run the militant network and has not been heard from for nearly a year, US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said on Wednesday. Mr. Rumsfeld said on a trip to Pakistan that the Bush administration still considers it a priority to capture the mastermind of the Sept 11, 2001 attacks on the United States, who is believed to be hiding somewhere in the mountains along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border. "I think it is interesting that we haven't heard from him for close to a year," Mr. Rumsfeld told reporters en route to Islamabad. "I don't know what it means, but I suspect in any event if he is alive and functioning that he is spending a major fraction of his time trying to avoid being caught," Mr. Rumsfeld said."

8. "US Defense Chief Rumsfeld Visits Afghanistan" "The Nation" (12/22)

"US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld arrived in

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Afghanistan on Wednesday for a brief visit that will

include talks with President Hamid Karzai, the President's office said.... He was due to meet Karzai for talks that would touch on US military operations in Afghanistan, a presidential spokesman said. Rumsfeld announced on Tuesday that the United States would reduce its troop strength in Afghanistan next year by between 2,000 and 3,000 soldiers from the current 19,000. The troops are based mainly in the insurgency-hit south and east, helping to hunt militants from the ousted Taliban regime and other Islamic outfits who carry out regular attacks."

9. "Rumsfeld Assures Kabul Of Continued Military Support" "Daily Times" (12/22)

"Afghan President Hamid Karzai said on Wednesday the coming reduction in US troop levels should have no harmful effect on Afghanistan's security. "The United States has assured us of continued support and assistance on all matters," Karzai said at a joint news conference with US Defense Secretary Donald H Rumsfeld. Rumsfeld, who flew here from Pakistan where he toured US humanitarian assistance to earthquake victims, told reporters the United States is not going to abandon Afghanistan. "We certainly remain committed to our long-term relationship," Rumsfeld said."

10. "Younas Qanooni Elected Speaker Of Afghan National Assembly," "Jang" (12/22)

"A leader of the Northern Alliance and former Interior Minister Younas Qanooni has been elected the Speaker of the Afghan National Assembly. He polled 122 votes while his rival Ustad Sayyaf got 117 votes. Hamid Karzai's representative got 16 while U.S. backed candidate bagged nine votes."

11. "Afghan 'Secret Prisons' - Pressure Mounting On The US" "Daily Times" (12/22)

"Afghanistan's main rights group demanded on Wednesday the United States come clean about reported secret detention centers in the country while an Afghan official played down the existence of such facilities. New York-based Human Rights Watch, citing inmates as sources, said in a report this week that the United States operated a secret prison near the capital Kabul where detainees were abused and tortured as recently as

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2004."

12. "US Scientific Experts Complete Reconstruction Consultations" "Pakistan Observer" (12/22)

"As part of an ongoing effort to assist the Pakistani government in its reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts the USAID funded delegation of world-renowned American reconstruction experts, including earthquake engineers and urban planners, completed initial visit to Pakistan. According to information available at US Consulate Karachi the team's on-the-ground observations and vigorous dialogue with Pakistani government leaders and scientists, the US expert team identified a host of options to support Pakistan's initiative to "build back better." American experts will return to Pakistan over the next few months to facilitate continued US-Pakistan collaboration on reconstruction planning. Subsequent American teams will focus on providing international

best practices relevant to the particular needs of the Government of Pakistan's earthquake reconstruction efforts."

13. "Impression About Muslims Are Being Proved Wrong: U.S. Consul General Michael Spangler Says In Swabi" "Jang" (12/22)

"... U.S. Consul General Michael Spangler has said that the U.S. will not abandon Pakistan in this hour of need. Addressing a gathering of Christian community in Swabi, Michael Spangler has said that the U.S. will continue to support Pakistan till the complete rehabilitation of quake-affected areas. He said that he was moved to see the Muslims and Christians sitting side by side on this land of Pakhtoon people and 'he would be happy to tell this to his mother that Muslim brothers are sharing our festivities'. 'It shows that our impressions about Muslims are being proved wrong, in fact Muslims have a respect and tolerance for other creeds and the rights of minorities', he noted...."

14. "U.S. Congress Demands Abrogation Of Nuclear Agreement With India; Accord Will Give Rise To Security Complications," "Jang" (12/22)

"Two members of the U.S. Congress have proposed a resolution calling for the abrogation of U.S.-India nuclear agreement since it would give rise to security complications for the world at large and particularly

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South Asia. The resolution, which has been proposed by Democratic member Edward Marci and Republican member Fred, if adopted would be a signal for the U.S. Congress to turn down the U.S.-India agreement reached on July 18 last."

15. "Pakistan Mum On US-India N-Ties" "Daily Times" (12/22)

"Indian Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran said here on Wednesday that Pakistan had not brought up the July 18, 2005 Indo-US nuclear cooperation agreement under discussion with India at any level. Asked after an address on US-India relations at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, if, given the consternation with which the July 18 agreement between India and the United States was viewed in Pakistan, Islamabad had raised the issue at any level with India, Saran replied, "Never in my knowledge."

16. "Composite Dialogue To Resume On Jan 17" "The News" (12/21)

"The Foreign Secretaries of Pakistan and India will meet in New Delhi on January 17-18 to initiate the third round of the composite dialogue between the two countries. Foreign Secretary Riaz Muhammad Khan will head Pakistan's delegation and hold two-day talks with Indian Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran."

17. "India And Pakistan Must Find New Solution To Kashmir" "Daily Times" (12/22)

"Speakers at a seminar on the possible solutions to the Kashmir conflict on Wednesday said that militancy was no longer an option in the ongoing freedom movement. They said that parliament should be consulted on the

proposals made for the solution of Kashmir dispute and the government should get approval of political parties before presenting any offer to India. The Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development and Transparency (PILDAT) arranged the seminar. PPP MNA Sherry Rehman said that Parliament and civil society should be consulted on policies made on Kashmir."

18. "No Democracy In Pakistan: Zafar" "Dawn" (12/22)

"Senior lawyer and ruling Pakistan Muslim League (PML) Senator S.M. Zafar has admitted that there is no

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democracy in Pakistan at present and there is a need to end one-man rule in the country. "It is true that there is no democracy in Pakistan," said Mr. Zafar while speaking at a briefing on "Resolving the Kashmir dispute: options for Pakistan", organized by Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development on Wednesday."

19. "Govt. To Take Action Against 390 Extremists: Musharraf" "The Nation" (12/22)

"The government has identified 390 individuals belonging to banned Jihadi groups it will move against for fanning extremism, President General Pervez Musharraf has said. "Action is also being taken against those using mosques for spreading extremism and those publishing hate material," General Musharraf said in a speech at the Pakistan Public Affairs Committee's (Pak-PAC's) 16th annual banquet on Wednesday."

20. "No Let-Up In Kohlu Army Action: Two Hideouts Destroyed" "Dawn" (12/22)

"Action against Marri tribesmen allegedly involved in firing rockets, carrying out bomb blasts and attacking forces continued on Wednesday in the district of Kohlu and two more camps of insurgents were destroyed in the mountainous areas of the district. As helicopter gunships looked for "hideouts and camps" in different areas, rocket attacks were reported at check posts of the Frontier Corps and other paramilitary forces in Kohlu, Mand and Nushki regions of the Province."

21. "It Is Enmity With Islam To Remove The Method Of Teaching Namaz From The Islamic Studies Books; We Do Not Accept This Decision, Say Religious Parties; Jamiat To Hold Countrywide Protest Today," "Khabrain" (12/22)

"Religious parties have strongly protested the [government] decision to remove the method of teaching namaz [daily prayer] from the Islamic studies text books. They have termed it a step towards turning the curriculum secular, and added that it is being done at U.S. behest. Meanwhile, the Islami Jamiat Tuleba [Jamaat-e-Islami's student wing] has announced a countrywide protest against this decision today."

Editorials/Opinions

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22. "Kashmir Issue: Dick Cheney's Assurance and U.S. Words and Deeds," an editorial in the second largest Urdu daily "Nawa-e-Waqt" (12/22)

"During his six-hour visit to Pakistan, U.S. Vice

President Dick Cheney assured that his country would continue cooperation with Pakistan for reconstruction and help Pakistan deal with the difficulties arising from the earthquake. He showed a positive response to President Musharraf's request for the U.S. to play its role in resolving the Kashmir dispute.... It is encouraging that President Musharraf urged the U.S. to use its influence on Kashmir and the U.S. Vice President not only responded positively to it but also assured that the U.S. would continue to assist Pakistan in reconstruction efforts.... We should not forget for a even a second that the U.S. is an unreliable state, and if someone feels otherwise, the Kashmir issue should be presented to the U.S. as a test case; the U.S. should pressure India to give Kashmiris the right to self-determination so that tension in the region can come to an end and the two countries can live and progress in peace. U.S. sincerity would be judged from the practical steps it takes in the regard, not VP Dick Cheney's assurances."

23. "U.S. Vice President Dick Cheney's Visit," an editorial note in the center-right Urdu daily "Pakistan" (12/22)

"U.S. Vice President Dick Cheney has returned to the U.S. after a brief visit to Pakistan. This visit was undoubtedly important, but since the details of [the discussion] are not known yet it cannot be commented upon. The Government of Pakistan must issue a policy statement on the visit. However, the honorable guest observed the earthquake devastation himself as well as the reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts. It is hoped that after this visit, the assistance announced by the U.S. would arrive soon, and would be increased as well."

24. "U.S. Vice President's Arrival And Sudden Departure," an op-ed by Ataur Rehman in the second largest Urdu daily "Nawa-e-Waqt" (12/22)

"U.S. Vice President Dick Cheney arrived on a visit to Islamabad and Muzaffarabad and then left suddenly after 6 hours. What was the purpose of the visit, why did he

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leave so soon? What assurances did he make, and what assurances did he get in return? All this will become clear after some time.... However, if for some reason Mr. Cheney's agenda remained incomplete due to the brief stay, it would certainly be completed by Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld who might be in Islamabad as you read these lines. Rumsfeld is not merely the Defense Secretary; he is number three in U.S. policy making after the President and Vice President. He is also counted among the group of neo-conservatives.... Dr. Shireen Mazari, Director General of the government's Institute of Strategic Studies has raised an interesting question regarding the recent high-level U.S. visits to Pakistan in a column. She says, if the U.S. and NATO troops are in Pakistan for relief work as claimed, what was a [U.S.] vehicle - guarded by the Pakistan military - doing in Islamabad's Khayaban-e-Iqbal. Dr. Mazari feels that this [vehicle] was providing surveillance or security to someone. Whatever the fact, U.S. and NATO troops' mission in Pakistan seems deeper than is being stated."

25. "Musharraf-Cheney Meeting And The Kashmir Issue,"

an editorial in the populist Urdu daily "Khabrain" (12/22)

"America is in a position to help resolve disputes between India and Pakistan as it has close ties with both. Hence it can pressure both countries to find a just solution to the issue.... We hope that Vice President Cheney would take the issue further and urge the U.S. President to use his influence in resolving the Kashmir issue."

26. "Musharraf - Cheney Meeting And Kashmir Problem" an editorial in Populist Urdu daily, "Khabrain" (12/22)

"... President Musharraf has asked U.S. Vice President Dick Cheney to exert pressure on India to resolve the Kashmir issue. The way that Americans have provided help and assistance for the relief of quake victims of Pakistan is praiseworthy. Now, that Dick Cheney has assured Pakistan to continue assistance for the reconstruction work is also commendable. The people of Pakistan are grateful to the people of the United States.... The U.S. is in a position to use its influence to bring about a resolution to the Kashmir issue. In past, the U.S. administration urged both India and Pakistan to resolve this issue through dialogue, but

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this approach did not succeed. We hope that the U.S. Vice President will take steps to help resolve this issue for a long-lasting peace in South Asia...."

27. "Dick Cheney's Visit" an editorial in Popular Islamabad-based Urdu daily, "Ausaf" (12/22)

"... The surprise visits of the U.S. officials have become a routine matter following the war on terrorism. After Dick Cheney, Defense Secretary Rumsfeld and General Schoomaker will visit Pakistan soon. Earthquake relief activities of U.S. troops and their visit to the military hospital in Muzaffarabad are not the actual motives of Dick Cheney's visit to Pakistan. What were the real motives of his visit? Perhaps our government wanted to keep things secret, and it is saying that there is no pressure on Pakistan from the U.S. and these visits are goodwill visits. If it is true, then why do U.S. officials not visit those countries, which enjoy good and cordial relations with the U.S.?...."

28. "Musharraf - Dick Cheney Meeting" an editorial in Popular Islamabad-based Urdu daily, "Express" (12/22)

"... If the U.S. adopts policies based on justice and equality, it is not difficult to create peace in South Asia and Middle East. The main cause of the unrest in the Middle East is not Iraq, Iran or Syria, but Israel. Palestinian people are struggling for their fundamental rights. The policymakers have also recognized these rights. Similarly, the struggle of the Kashmiri people is also based on principles. Kashmir and Palestine are a test case for the U.S. friendship and sincerity with the Muslim world. Mr. Dick Cheney has leverage over U.S. policymakers. He must be aware of the facts, so we hope that he will play a role to help resolve the problems the Muslim world is facing at the moment...."

29. "U.S. Another Assurance" an editorial in Islamabad-based Urdu daily, "Al-Akhbar" (12/22)

"... The U.S. has once again pledged to continue assistance for the reconstruction work in quake-affected areas. Vice President Dick Cheney also conveyed a message from President Bush to President Musharraf. Both leaders also agreed to boost cooperation in the ongoing war on terrorism.... Apart from U.S. assistance, the stumbling block in relations between the two countries is that the western media always engages in negative propaganda especially with reference to

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extremism and terrorism.... In fact, Pakistan is taking part in the war on terrorism just to defend the western world and the U.S. Besides, the Pakistani government is also urging reconciliation and dialogue between Muslims and the Western world. Therefore, the U.S. and the West should change its behavior towards Pakistan and the people of Pakistan...."

30. "Multifaceted Ties," an editorial in the center-right national English daily, "The Nation" (12/22)

"US Vice President Dick Cheney has said the US wants to further boost its multifaceted ties with Pakistan. While Pakistanis generally appreciate the assistance provided by Washington to the quake victims including a field hospital and much needed Chinooks, many still note that little has been done to help Pakistan as far as its long-term interests are concerned... Another perennial source of complaints is US interference in Pakistan's internal affairs. Recently the ARD has written a letter protesting against Ambassador Ryan C. Crocker's negative remarks about the performance of the PPP and PML (N) governments. Many think the US takes up the issue of democracy when it suits it, and ignores it when it doesn't. A member of Mr. Cheney's delegation has reportedly objected to certain relief organizations being allowed to function in the quake-hit areas. As long as these organizations continue to provide much needed relief without indulging in any unlawful activity, nobody has a right to object."

31. "Our 'Jihadi Image' In The Quake-Hit Areas," an editorial in the Lahore-based liberal English daily, "Daily Times" (12/22)

"According to reports, Western relief agencies, including those run by the United Nations and the United States government, have complained of "perceptible harassment by 'Jihadi elements' working in the quake hit-areas in Azad Kashmir and the NWFP". There are some 20,000 workers belonging to religious and Jihadi NGOs carrying out relief activities there, led by the most notorious "renamed" Lashkar-e-Tayba... This was preceded by a statement by the US ambassador to Pakistan, Ryan C Crocker, calling upon the government to monitor and, if necessary, stop some Jihadi organizations from continuing their relief work... The Jamaat-e-Islami has its own outfit in the field, too, under the name of Al Khidmet Foundation, deploying 12,000 workers. It denies any friction with Western agencies, although it has had

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a dangerous confrontation with the relief groups run by the MQM in the AJK area...Pakistan's bad image is getting in the way once again. That the Jihadis are "waiting in the wings" has become clear to everyone in the world...Is it possible that the delay in the fulfillment of these pledges could be attributed to the Jihadis enhancing their image at the cost of the image of the country? It goes without saying that should the

Foreign Office start receiving expressions of polite reservation from the West; it would be hard put to play on the front foot.... Therefore something must be done urgently to prevent the religious and Jihadi elements (around 20,000) from coming face to face with the Western NGOs that they have been taught in the past to hate." Crocker

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